

Built in 1882-3 by ZCMI → BYU

BYU Seeking Centennial Information

BYU is in the process of writing its centennial history and would appreciate the use of any diaries, journals, old photographs, family records or other historical materials which pertain to BYU. Persons who can assist with such material (all of which will be returned) should contact Dr. Ernest L. Wilkinson, chairman of the history committee, or Hollis Scott, archives director.



ZCMI Warehouse Once Housed Brigham Young Academy

Old Provo Landmark Building Being Razed

By N. L. CHRISTENSEN

One of Provo's landmarks — a building steeped in tradition and memories mainly because it was an early-day home of Brigham Young Academy — is being torn down.

It is the old ZCMI (Zion's Co-operative Mercantile Institution) Warehouse at Sixth South and University Avenue, designated in earlier days as First and "J" Streets.

Now owned by D. R. (Doc) Norton, Provo businessman, the

pioneer-vintage structure is being razed to make the site available for future industrial development.

The large structure was built in 1882-83 by ZCMI and for more than 6½ decades it served as operations base for a wholesale grocery and hardware business in the central and southern part of the state.

Historic Importance

But it gained its lasting place in Provo history as the home of the old B.Y. Academy, forerun-

ner of Brigham Young University, during the period 1884-1892.

A far cry from the sprawling campus of beautiful buildings enjoyed by BYU today, the ZCMI Warehouse nevertheless was quite a structure in its day. It became an educational plant through a quirk of fate. There was a fire the night of Jan. 4, 1884 which destroyed the first Academy building, the Jesse William Lewis Hall at Third West and Center Streets (where the Provo Chamber of Com-

merce offices now stand).

Determined not to let the disaster doom the eight-year-old Academy, Principal Karl G. Maeser and A. O. Smoot, chairman of the BYA board of trustees, arranged temporary quarters in the old Provo Meeting House on the present Tabernacle Block and in two newly-completed business buildings — the S. S. Jones store and the First National Bank. Furniture saved from the fire helped to convert the business buildings

into classrooms.

ZCMI's Entry

ZCMI had made its entry into Provo only a few months before the Lewis Building fire. Actually, according to research by H. H. Bennett and Marjorie Beard, current president and secretary, respectively, of ZCMI, minutes of the board showed first discussions concerning a Provo warehouse April 10, 1882.

Another entry, dated Sept. 27, (See OLD PROVO, Page 8)

